

**Everything You Need To Know About
Chiropractic And Living A Healthier Life**

by Dr. Matthew Tompkins

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What’s Inside

The Journey to Pain Relief.....4

Most of the population is in pain every day. Are you?.....5

What is a chiropractor?.....6

The Shape of Stability: Body, Mind, and Lifestyle.....8

Chiropractic Care: The Solution to Pain.....11

FAQs.....15

Summing Up.....18

Limited Time Offer.....19



The Journey to Pain Relief



I bet most of you have seen or heard chiropractors in ads or on commercials, claiming that they can minimize your pain. You've heard friends and family sing the praises of their chiropractors. You know they have something to do with pulling and popping your body.

You're interested—but you want to know more. Much more. You ask, “What exactly does a chiropractor do, and what can he do for me? Do I really need a chiropractor? Can I afford to go? Can I afford not to?” Allow me to put your mind at ease.

My name is Dr. Matt Tompkins, and I'm an expert at relieving the pain that daily life inflicts on our bodies. In the following eBook, I'll explain what a chiropractor does, specifically what I do. I will also pinpoint the types of pain and conditions that I typically treat. By the time you're finished reading this, your questions will be answered about my chiropractic practice, including its unbeatable affordability, and you'll be ready to start your journey toward a pain-free life.



Most of the population is in pain every day. Are you?

Research suggests that up to 90% of the population will have at least one case of severe neck or back pain in their lifetime. What is truly tragic is that 75% of the population will develop a chronic problem that has the potential to be permanent.

Many cases I see are problems that are brought on by work and daily life. When people sit, stand, and sleep in the wrong positions, and these habits are hard to break. Their jobs, hobbies, and family activities are physically demanding and stressful to the spine.

Here is the truth: When you do battle with the world, the world fights back, and your body is rarely the victor, especially over time.

The result is pain. The solution is chiropractic care and education.



What is a chiropractor?

A chiropractor is a licensed physician with the educational and professional expertise in the area of treating symptoms such as (but not limited to):

- Headaches
- Neck Pain & Tightness
- Lower Back Pain & Tightness
- Sciatica
- Hip, Knee and Ankle Pain
- Pain in the Hands and Wrist
- General Pain
- Workers Compensation
- Auto Accidents

The word “chiropractor” comes from the Greek words for “hand” and “practice, or treat”, so “chiropractic” literally means, “treating with the hands”. Therefore, chiropractors work with their hands to adjust or “mobilize” the joints of the spine in order to provide drug and surgery-free relief to a person’s symptoms and to restore their spine back to normal health.

Chiropractors rely on different adjusting techniques to correct postural problems, reduce structural misalignments, and improve range of joint motion. They also rely on their extensive background in spinal anatomy combined with years of hands-on education to provide adjustments in a comfortable, pain-free, and safe manner.

I also feel it is crucial to focus on the soft tissues (muscle, tendon, ligaments and fascia) and how they are functioning. Most pain can be traced to a source, most often that is a muscle, ligament or tendon that is cause most of the pain. The question is why does it hurt? Was there trauma that occurred recently or even years ago that could be related? Or maybe it is the repetitive trauma of your daily work or activities that are being done with improper posture?

No matter the answers the bodies natural response to injured tissue is to heal rebuild and protect. The part of that process that is often the source of pain, especially chronic pain it is protection part. This entails building up the tissue surrounding area or the injury resulting in scarring. Just like a cut on your skin can leave a scar, injuries under the skin leave scars. The scars tend to be restrictive to the natural movements of that muscle, tendon, ligament or fascia, which in turn can lead to pain.

Soft tissue manipulation, message and re-education are often essential to ultimately being pain free and more importantly preventing re-injury.

The other aspect of my care that I feel is very important when looking at the big picture is the affect pain has on muscle function. When you have an injury and that injury produces continuous pain, that

pain affects not just the tissue injured but also affect surrounding the area, specifically the muscles. Research shows that pain acts like a dimmer switch to muscles around the injury resulting in atrophy and deactivation of them. If pain is around long enough this result in permanent atrophy and deactivation if this is not addressed in the course of your treatment and recovery.

The aspect of care that is used to address this phenomenon is through movement screening and analysis and prescribed therapeutic exercise. Therapeutic exercises are prescribed to focus on the redevelopment and re-education of the specific muscles that have been affected by the injury.

The concept I think is important to understand is that physiologically in the body is that pain is the last thing to arrive and the first thing to go. And if your goal is to not just get out of pain but stay out of pain and prevent re-injury, it is essential to address the root of the cause of the pain, and not forgetting about the root of the cause when the pain goes away.

Many chiropractors are heavily involved in preventative health measures as well. They are advocates of proper nutrition, exercise, non-smoking, and natural foods. Many also recommend maintaining the health of the spine through the process of regular “maintenance” adjustments; this is up to the patient, because everybody responds differently. "Maintenance" treatments can range once every 1 or 2 years or once every 1 or 2 month. It depends on the condition it's severity, and how committed the patient is to making lifestyle changes to stay out of pain.

What mainly sets chiropractors apart from other physicians is this: a chiropractor treats the entire person—body, mind, and lifestyle.



The Shape of Stability: Body, Mind, and Lifestyle

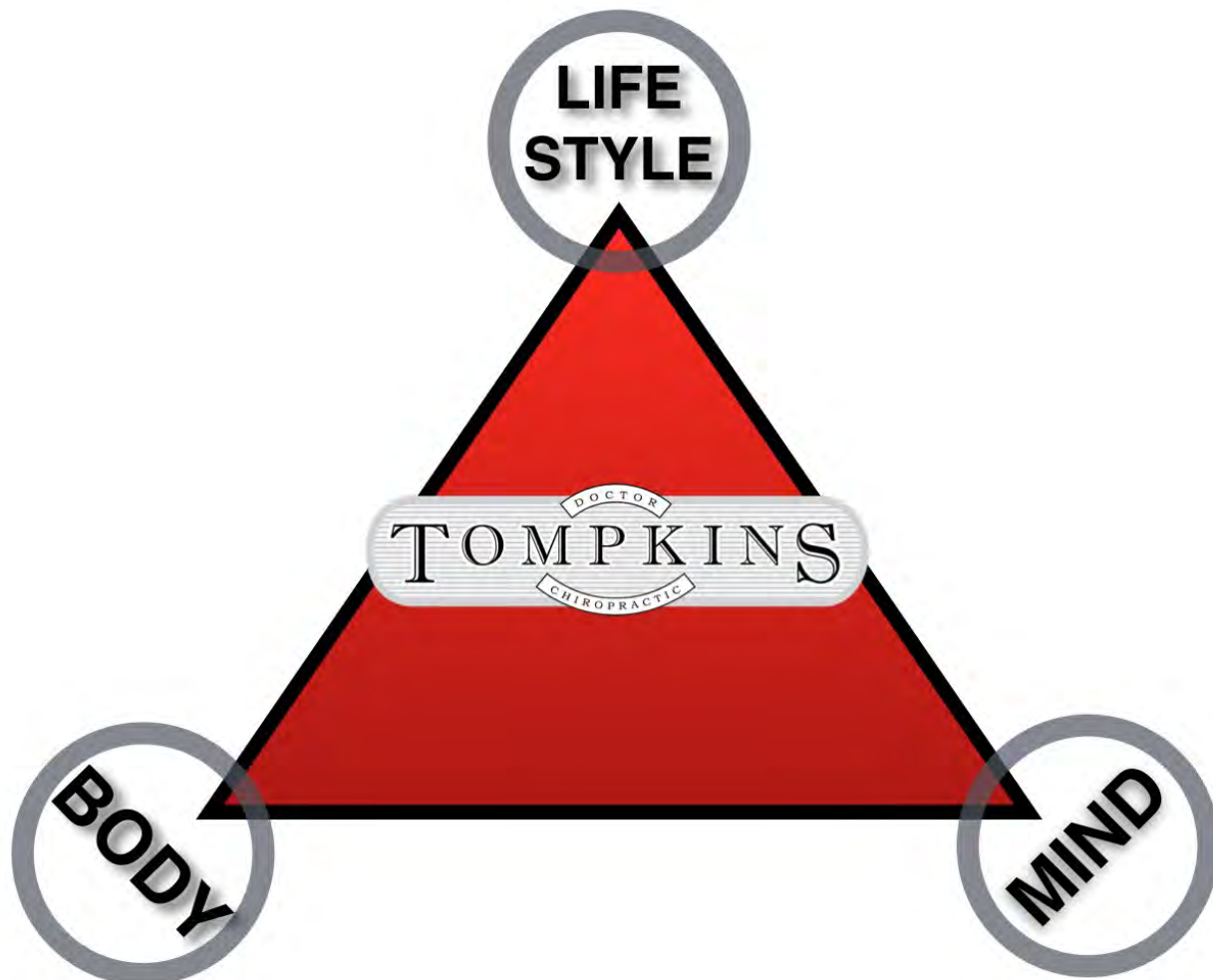
Imagine a triangle. The three sides are uniform, as are the three angles. Not one part of it is more important than the others. Its base is strong, no matter which side it rests upon, and, because of its shape, it will not roll or tip over. It is the picture of stability.

Your body, your mind, and your lifestyle are your triangle of strength. All have to be equally cared for, maintained, and balanced. If one factor is in poor condition, your entire being suffers, and will continue to suffer until the problem is fixed.

The Triangle of Health: The 3 Parts to Health

As a chiropractor, I work with all three components. I provide you with the care you need to keep your body and mind working together in the best way possible, and I also provide you with time-honored advice that you can use in your daily life to keep standing strong.

In the following pages, I address how I treat all three necessary parts.



Part 1 & 2: The Body and Mind

I put these two together because I found that it is nearly impossible to address one without the other. If you have a computer that is connected to the Internet by a cable, then you know that that cable is essential to whether or not you are online. If that cable becomes unplugged or damaged, your computer can't access the information it needs to email Grandma, check the stock market, or visit WWW.DRTOMPKINSBEND.COM.

Your mind is a master computer that controls how your body subconsciously reacts to everything, but your spinal cord is the key to the delivery of hyper-speed information. In fact, the spinal cord is so important that even the slightest injuries to it can have drastic effects on the body.

Fortunately, much like the skull protects the brain, the spinal cord is also totally encased in a hard body shell, known as the spinal column or spine. However, unlike the skull, whose purpose is only to protect the brain, the spine has several other responsibilities besides encasement, such as the structure, stabilization and movement of the body.

Unfortunately, because our spine is moveable and made up of many joints, muscles and ligaments, and as a result both injury and time tend to take their toll. As a result this repetitive stress leads to dysfunction in the spinal joints. If left untreated this dysfunction can lead to weakness and instability that puts the body at risk for more serious injuries or conditions. These conditions range from muscle spasms, sprained/torn ligaments, strained/torn muscles, arthritis, and even a disc herniation. This if these conditions become chronic (when a condition lasts more than 3 months or the same injury has happened more than once) this will lead to muscle weakness and deterioration over time.

There is also an intensely close relationship between the spine and the spinal cord allows these changes in the spine to affect the spinal cord and nerve roots, thereby affecting the brain's ability to communicate with that particular portion of the body. When that happens, the body is no longer able to adapt to external changes and heal from injury the way it should. The result again is pain, illness, or chronic problems that may never go away.

But, there is a solution to spinal dysfunction, and that is chiropractic care.

Chiropractors seek to use adjustments to restore normal joint function and mobility in the spine, thereby eliminating the underlying cause of the condition. The adjustments work through several mechanisms: they break up fibrous tissues that restrict joint motion, they relieve pressure from the spinal cord and sensitive nerve roots, and they reset neurological receptors in the surrounding tissues. Once function has been restored, the body is then allowed to do what it was designed to do, protect itself from future injury.

Think of it this way. A car that is not functioning properly and it is left unchecked and un-treated damage can occur over time. The damage could be irreparable, or at least extremely expensive. The same goes for our bodies.

Part 3: Lifestyle

Your lifestyle is completely up to you. What you eat, drink, and how you behave are all under your control. However, if you want to keep your life as stable as the triangle I discussed earlier, then it would be in your best interest to follow these tips, all of which I advise to my patients.

Eat well. Your ideal diet should consist of lean meats, eggs, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, cheeses, nuts, and berries. Eat very little sugar or grains (corn, wheat, rice and potatoes), better yet, eliminate them from your diet altogether.

Drink well. That means water. At minimum, you need 8 glasses per day. Other beverages (coffee, tea, soda, juices, beer, etc.), even if they are sugar free, tend to have a diuretic effect, which means they make you go to the bathroom more than necessary.

Exercise well. In order to stay healthy and heal quickly, the human body requires a certain amount of both cardiovascular activity and weight training, both of which should equally work all of the major muscle groups. Also, exercise helps the body lose excess weight; having more pounds than required for your frame size increases the stress on your spine.

Flex well. Our joints rely on movement to bring nutrients in and take waste products away. Without good movement, joints do not get the proper nutrients, and degeneration, or arthritis, begins to occur. Make stretching and range of motion exercises a part of your normal daily routine. Use it or lose it

Sit well. Choose a chair that has good low back support (one that curves out at the bottom). When you sit, do not slouch; instead, sit straight, with your feet flat on the floor, and with nothing in your back pockets. Avoid recliners and soft couches, as they do not support your back. Take frequent stretch breaks if you have to sit for a long time. If you are at a desk, organize the things around you so that your neck or body is not twisted and you are not forced to look up or down for long periods.

Stand well. Keep your body straight and your shoulders back. When you have to stand in one place for long periods of time, put one foot on a 4-6-inch stool to help keep pressure off your spine. Avoid wearing high heels if you are going to spend much time on your feet.

Sleep well. Our body needs good sleep to rest, renew, and heal. Don't sleep on the couch; instead, invest in a mattress that will keep your body well supported and comfortable. Sleep on your side or back, rather than on your stomach. Avoid using two pillows, and never watch television in bed.

Think well. Long-term stress increases muscle tension and risk of injury. Stress reduces your body's ability to regenerate and heal and it lowers your pain tolerance.

Chiropractic Care: The Solution to Pain

Earlier in this report, I listed the problems that I most commonly treat. Now that you understand what a chiropractor does and what I believe, let's review each of these types of problems. I will go over the causes of each, and my treatments and recommendation for the relief of these types of pain. By the time you have read these next few pages, you will know if your pain lies in one or more of these categories, and you will be ready to take the next step toward relief.

Headaches

Headaches are one of the number one problems that drive people to either visit a doctor or take over-the-counter pain medication. In fact, as a chiropractor, headaches are also one of the most common problems that I treat on a daily basis.

The most common type of headache is the tension headache, where the sufferer experiences a tight band around the head, almost as if the head were caught in a "vise-grip." The pain and tightness is usually the most intense at the base of the skull and tends to start in the neck and shoulder muscles. The headache may last only one day, but it may also last a week or longer.

Tension headaches tend to be aggravated by stressful situations, or they can be brought on by prolonged periods of bad posture, such as sitting incorrectly while driving or in a chair with poor support.

Actually, I have found that most tension headaches sufferers also have poor upper back and neck posture, have reduced mobility of the joints of the neck, and experience chronic tightness of the neck and upper shoulder muscles. For many people, chiropractic treatment and correction of these underlying causes is an extremely effective means to either reduce or totally eliminate these headaches.

You see surrounding your brain is a thin layer of very sensitive tissue. A small "Tissue Bridge" connects this tissue to the neck muscles. When the joints in your neck are not functioning properly, and/or if there is increased tension in the neck muscles, the tension on the bridge causes kinks and folds to form in the layer of tissue surrounding the brain. The result: a tight, painful tension headache.

The good news is that treatments for tension headaches do not have to involve drugs or surgery.

At my office, I adjust or mobilize the joints of the spine in order to restore normal motion and reduce the tension on the neck muscles, thereby reducing the tension on the tissue surrounding the brain. The result: a significant reduction in headache intensity and frequency.

I can also provide advice related to proper ergonomics while driving and sitting, as well as tips on simple things that you can do at home when you feel a tension headache starting.

Lower Back Pain/Joint Pain

Do you wake up in the mornings with aching lower back pain? Does back pain keep you from sleeping well at night? Does it take you awhile to get moving in the mornings? Does your lower back hurt if you have been sitting on your couch or in your car? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then the following information may be right for you.

As a chiropractor, I see that people experience lower back pain during all stages of life, from college age to retirement. Usually the symptoms are described as severe soreness and stiffness during the night while sleeping and/or when first getting up in the morning. Most people also claim that the lower back pain and discomfort tends to ease up after thirty minutes to an hour after they wake up.

So what is happening? Most doctors will just tell you that you have arthritis in the joints of your lower back, and many will prescribe you drugs to numb the pain.

However, you should know that arthritis is not a disease, but rather a process that can happen to a person's joints, whether in the back or anywhere else in the body. If a person has arthritis, his or her joints have slowly decreased in movement over time (usually because of injury, lack of use, or chronic problems) and stiffness and discomfort have set in.

So what causes this stiffness and pain? Well, just like all the other tissues in our body, the joints need a constant supply of fresh nutrients and constant removal of waste products in order to stay healthy. In other words, if the bad stuff can't get out, the good stuff can't do its job. You know what happens when your toilet clogs; if you can't flush—it isn't pretty.

Fortunately, we know exactly what stops this system in your joints from working properly, and that is lack of movement.

You see, unlike muscles, which have the blood stream to bring them fresh nutrients and take away waste products, the joints rely totally on motion to stay healthy. The activity of our joints acts as sort of a pump that is constantly exchanging fluid with the tissues around them. This allows for the delivery of fresh nutrients that can rejuvenate and repair joints as well as the removal of harmful waste products such as lactic acid.

Through either acute injuries or chronic progressive misuse, our joints tend to lose their normal range of motion, which allows for joint breakdown to occur, resulting in pain. The pain is usually worse at night or in the morning because a person has been very still for a prolonged period,

resulting in more build up of harmful wastes. Moving around helps remove some of the waste and the joints begin to feel better, at least until the next morning.

Tip: If you wake up with lower back pain, these stretches may help. Before you even get out of bed in the morning, roll over on to your back and pull one knee up toward your chest as far as you can comfortably and hold with both hands. Don't bounce or pull so hard that it hurts, but hold this position smoothly for 1 minute. Then pull your knee across your body, and hold for 1 minute. Repeat with the other leg. Next, pull both knees up at the same time and hold for 1 minute. You may need to repeat this procedure 2-3 times. Lastly, gently roll over and up into a seated position on the side of the bed. Once again, pull one knee up to your chest as far as is comfortable and hold for 1 minute, and then repeat with the other leg. Now you are ready to get up and go about your business.

Pain in Hands/Wrists

In my practice, I often consult with patients who are experiencing pain in their hands and wrists. Many times they have been told they have Carpal Tunnel Syndrome when, actually, there are other problems that can mimic Carpal Tunnel Syndrome; a thorough exam is required to find the answer.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome refers to a series of symptoms such as pain, tingling, and numbness in the hand, often accompanied by loss of grip strength and other symptoms. The pain and tingling can also run up into the arm.

However, many people who suffer from symptoms in the hands and wrists do not have true Carpal Tunnel Syndrome; rather their symptoms come from pressure on the nerves in the neck, upper back, and shoulders.

It is not surprising that dysfunction in the spine is often mistaken for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. In fact, problems of the neck, upper back, and shoulders can cause pressure on these nerves, resulting in similar symptoms as that of this painful condition of the hands and wrists. However, even though the symptoms are similar, if the problem indeed stems from the spine or shoulders, then the symptoms in the hands and wrists will not respond to standard Carpal Tunnel Syndrome treatments (splints, injections, and surgery).

If you are experiencing symptoms in both hands, the chances that your problem comes from the neck are that much greater.

The good news is most cases of hand and wrist pain can be relieved by chiropractic care. At Tompkins Chiropractic, I will perform a thorough evaluation to determine the exact cause of your symptoms. If I determine that your symptoms are coming from your neck, upper back, or shoulders, I will recommend a course of treatment to provide relief without surgery or injections.

Sciatica

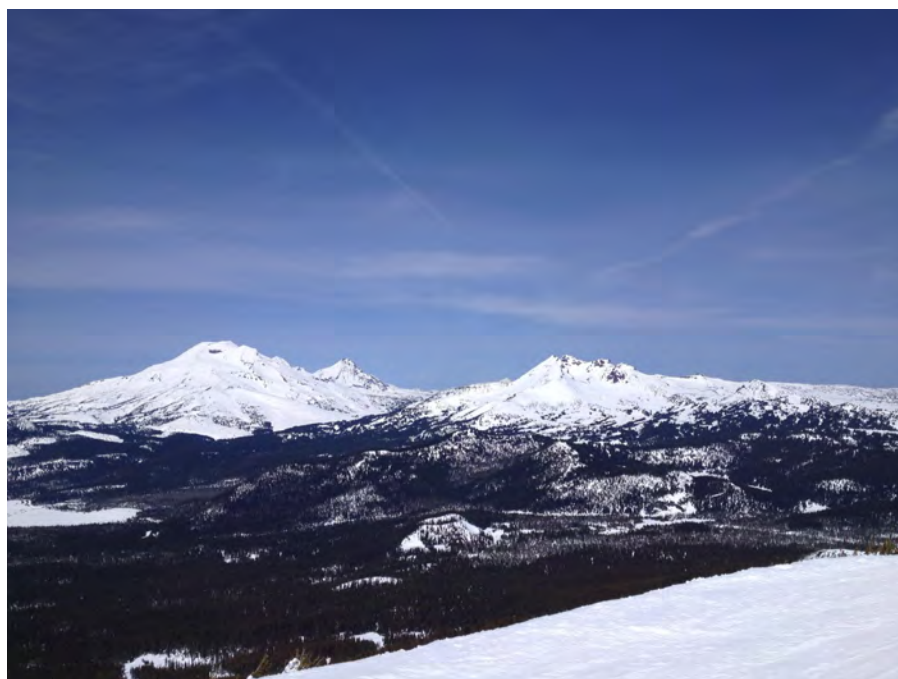
Sciatica generally refers to any set of symptoms running into the leg, which can include pain, numbness, burning, tingling, or all of the above. Sciatic symptoms can go part way down the leg or all the way to the toes, depending on the severity of the condition. Sciatica happens when the sciatic nerve or other nerves of the spine are compressed or irritated as they leave the spine and travel down the leg.

It is important to understand that sciatica refers to the symptoms of pain, numbness, or tingling, and not to the condition that is causing them. Bulged or herniated discs, muscle problems, chronic back problems, back injury complications, or a number of other causes can cause sciatica.

As a temporary home remedy for this painful condition, you can apply ice to the lower back or hip where the symptoms originate as an effective means of reducing swelling and inflammation. Ice should be used only 15-20 minutes at a time with 30 minutes between applications. There are also over-the-counter medications that can be used for control of swelling and inflammation, but they should be used short-term only.

However, for a more effective treatment of sciatica, I work with the affected muscles using manual soft tissue release therapies, and also employ spinal adjusting or “spinal mobilization” to directly relieve the pressure off of the nerves and speed up the healing process.

Why not make this the day you find relief?



FAQs

As you read the following questions and their answers, I hope you'll gain an even better understanding of chiropractic care. I've tried to include questions and responses that cover some of the other issues I work with in my practice, namely topics that did not fall neatly within the categories of this report.

Is it better to use ice or heat when I'm in pain?

I get asked this question more than any other and my best answer is...it depends. Let me explain first what ice and heat do when you put them on your body, then I will explain the two different scenarios for their use, followed by some do's and don'ts.

Both ice and heat serve to interrupt the pain that is traveling from an injured area to your brain. Essentially what happens is that the information your body transmits about the heat or cold travels to your brain faster than pain, so you don't feel the pain as much.

Both heat and cold also serve to reduce muscle spasms and muscle tension. Heat increases the circulation to an area, thereby bringing more nutrients and taking away more harmful waste products. Ice reduces the circulation to an area, thus reducing swelling. So, they both work, but there are specific times when one works much better than the other.

It is always best to use ice for the first 48-72 hours right after an injury. The ice will help to decrease the swelling and inflammation. After the first 72 hours, if the swelling and inflammation have gone down, you can switch to heat, which will help to relieve any muscle tension while you continue to heal.

It is best to use heat for chronic muscle soreness or soreness after an activity (as long as an injury with swelling is not present). The heat will help the muscles relax. Heat can also be helpful for chronic joint pain such as arthritis (osteoarthritis).

The directions for using ice and heat are the same. Apply ice or heat for 15-20 minutes at a time only. Then take away the ice or heat, and wait until the skin returns to room temperature (usually 30-40 minutes) before reapplying. It is ok to use a bag of ice or a commercial ice pack, as long as you wrap them in a towel first (to prevent injury to your skin). For heat, it is best to use a moist heat source such as a hot shower, hot tub, or hot towel.

I feel like exercising would help me, but I don't know where to start. Can you help me?

In a word, yes.

The best place to start is at the core. Your “core” muscles (the muscles of the trunk of the body) take priority over any other part of the body in terms of strength training

The reason for this is your core protects not only your vital organs but, just as importantly, they guard your spine from injury.

Imagine a cell phone tower. There are guide wires all around, each adjusted to the perfect amount of tension, to keep that tower stable.

Your spine is like that tower, and your trunk muscles are like the strategically positioned wires that keep the “tower” in line, while still being flexible and moving with the spine.

However, these “wires”—your muscles—must keep the correct amount of tension if the joints of the spine are to line up correctly. The muscles becoming slack, weak, or over-tight, cannot throw off the balance that keeps the muscles working together; if the balance is lost, the spine becomes vulnerable to injury and stress.

The good news is that it is never too late to start developing strong core muscles. I can help design a simple program that you can do at home, regardless of your current physical condition.

Which type of mattress is the best?

The mattress market has exploded recently and there are more choices than ever before. Each manufacturer claims that their mattresses are better than those of their competitors. Each brand claims that research has shown that people get better sleep with their products. All have snazzy commercials with impressive demonstrations. All claim that they have the perfect mattress for you.

There is only one problem...not every mattress is right for you.

The following tips will guide you in shopping for the correct mattress. By following these, you should be well on your way to restful sleep.

- Know that quality trumps hype.
- Don't buy a mattress based on gimmicks alone.
- Study the products.

- Know as much as you can about the three main types of mattress construction before you shop: traditional coil, air, and memory foam.
- Study yourself.
- Determine if you are a still sleeper, who may sleep well on a memory foam bed, or an active sleeper who would do better on a traditional coil or air mattress. Also determine if you and your sleep partner are different enough in size and sleep pattern to need an adjustable airbed.
- Time your trip wisely.
- Go shopping for your mattress in the late afternoon or early evening when you and your sleep partner (who should come with you) are tired.
- Take your time while shopping. Pick a mattress within your price range and lie on it for at least 15-20 minutes before trying a different one.
- Lie in the position that you normally sleep.
- Pay attention to your body and try and feel if you are being supported correctly and comfortably.
- No part of your body should sink in or sag more than the others.
- If you fall asleep, chances are you are either too tired, or you made an excellent choice.

Having the right kind of mattress is essential to a good night's sleep, which is one of the key elements of a healthy life. The right mattress, when paired with good chiropractic care, can also put you on the road to freedom from neck, back, and joint pain.

If I go to a chiropractor for my neck pain, will I have to keep going forever?

I get asked this question and ones like it a lot; the short answer is NO, that is not my philosophy.

Let's look at this a little more closely. You don't really have to keep going to a chiropractor forever if you go once for neck pain, low back pain, headaches, etc. The decision is totally yours, and my goal is to give you the tools to insure you don't have to. However, many people do return to a chiropractor after the first visit.

One reason for many patients' return regularly is that they simply want to keep their bodies feeling great and pain-free. Many patients do not realize how badly they are hurting, or how much the pain is affecting their lives until they start feeling better after getting adjusted by a chiropractor. When their bodies begin to feel just a little bit "off," they are aware that something is not right, and they want to get back to normal as soon as possible.

Another reason that patients tend to keep coming back to the chiropractor is simply to maintain a healthy habit. We know that eating right, exercising, and good hygiene are all habits necessary for a healthy lifestyle. You understand that your diet needs more variety than just potato chips and cookies. You would never go months without brushing your teeth. Why not show the spine, which is responsible for your functionality, the same respect?

Summing Up

By now you should be very well educated as to the practice and benefits of chiropractic care. You should have a good understanding of what to expect coming into my office, and you now have a few tips and tricks to use at home to temporarily relieve pain.

So, why should you come to me? What sets me apart as a chiropractor? Why would you benefit from visiting my office when there are scores of other qualified chiropractors in the area?

What sets me, Dr. Matt Tompkins, apart is that I make spend time with every patient. I will spend 30-45 minutes with every new patient. I will never schedule more than 4 patients an hour. That mean you will spend at least 15 minutes every time you come in. You will always leave feeling like you have been listened to and truly heard. My goal is not to convince you that you are going to need to see me for the rest of your life.

"MY MISSION IS TO TREAT AND EDUCATE EVERY PATIENT, IMPROVING THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE, AND GIVING THEM THE TOOLS TO STAY OUT OF PAIN AND DYSFUNCTION. I WOULD RATHER SEE YOU DOWNTOWN BEND, SHOPPING IN THE OLD MILL OR WALKING THE DESCHUTES RIVER TRAIL, RATHER THAN SEE YOU IN MY OFFICE FOR FURTHER TREATMENT"

I accept all major medical insurances, Medicare, and OHP.

If you or someone you know is in a car accident, don't waste any time, get into see me ASAP. With a car accident this can mean the difference between a short or long recovery, and preventing any chronic/long term (or worst case scenario permanent) injury from delayed treatment.

Don't live another day in pain when you can start the path to relief. Take the first step. Come over to my office at:

141 NW Greenwood Ave, Suite 101, Bend, OR 97701.
(Near Downtown Bend)

If you have any questions before you come, call direct at (541) 647-2797. You can also visit my new website at www.drmtompkinsbend.com.

I look forward to seeing you.

Dr. Matthew Tompkins
Doctor of Chiropractic

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